

# In a Garden Near Aix-en-Provence

by Jane Stuart

A morning's moonlit meadow is our stage;  
the characters have no address or age.

The pleasure that my lonely heart maintains  
when offering you the songs of mandolin  
and harp that plays romantic Byzantine  
reverie in lyrical sweet quatrains  
is knowing you will hear what love remains  
in morning songs offered at Argentine  
evening when you hear my discipline—  
such eager chords, such gentle strumming strains  
that give you solace when a cold wind shakes  
the world that was and we tremble to see  
night's blackness; then the darkening moonlight breaks  
against time's windows bringing memory  
nearer, close to your listening heart that wakes  
and mine that answers you with poetry.

Love is a harp that plays at night  
in answer to your mandolin.  
Our melodies are full of light,  
our love that was Alexandrine  
rises with windsong to take flight.

My sweetest love, you answer each accord  
with smiles that turn to summer winter's sighs.  
Your gentle voice offers me no discord  
and yet your passing fancy mystifies  
what I would say to you that is my love  
concealed in flattery and yet so true  
that I can only sing the light o' love  
that comes to me with golden years from you.  
This garden filled with time now fills with flowers  
that extend both your beauty and that grace  
that glows in sunlight and smiles through rain's showers  
that fall in shadows on your loved face.  
This happiness you bring me is my song.  
Praising your beauty, I can do no wrong.  
Troubadour's song is sad and free.  
He hears beauty he proposes,  
his tender heart predisposes  
any refusal; liberty  
answers the spirit that uncloses.